

Geneva Experiment Station Library to Receive \$2.1 Million Gift

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by Linda McCandless

GENEVA, NY: Frank A. Lee, Cornell University professor emeritus of food chemistry, has left an estate gift valued at more than \$2.1 million to the library at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, in Geneva, NY. Lee, who conducted pioneering research in the freezing of fruits and vegetables, worked at the Station from 1936 until his retirement in 1967. He died on September 25, 1999, at the age of 98, in Waterloo, NY.

Lee was devoted to the Experiment Station, and, in particular, to the library there. He was an ardent proponent of maintaining strong university libraries so scholars could pursue peer-reviewed research in their chosen fields. In his will, Lee specified that his bequest be used to purchase library resources that "can be of use to the research staff," including important back issues of scientific journals missing from the Geneva collections, scientific journal subscriptions, and a small portion for "modern scientific books."

"In recognition of this extraordinary gift, the Experiment Station library will be renamed the Frank A. Lee Library," said Janet McCue, Associate University



Frank A Lee

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Librarian for Life Sciences. "The gift will benefit Station researchers as well as the entire Cornell community. Journals that are of value to the Geneva community are just as important to Ithaca researchers. And, when the journal is in electronic form, it is immediately accessible to faculty and students on either campus."

"The timing of this gift could not be better," said Station Director James E. Hunter. "The acquisition budget of the Experiment Station library has grown only moderately during a period when the cost of print literature has increased significantly. At the same time, scientific literature is rapidly becoming available electronically. These funds will help the Station gain access to this valuable resource. Professor Lee's generosity will ensure that the Library will continue to meet the needs of the faculty, staff, and graduate students at the Station."

The gift will function as an endowment and is the largest ever received by the Experiment Station.

"This gift is a tribute to the value of the library to the Station community, and a tribute to the dedication of former librarians and library staff," said Marty Schlabach, director of the Experiment Station library. "The gift will allow the continuation of print journal subscriptions and expansion of access to electronic journals."

Lee's associates in food science remember him as very private, conscientious and hard-working man, who liked to hunt and fish, collect early American antiques, cook, and travel, especially to Germany where he had family. "Frank was a very studious scientist who spent a lot of time in the library," said former Station director Donald Barton. Even after his retirement he "almost lived in the library," working on materials to update his textbook, *Basic Food Chemistry*, said Barton.

As professor of food chemistry, Lee conducted research on the blanching and freezing of fruits and vegetables when that industry was in its infancy. He was perhaps best known for his studies on the oxidation of lipids in vegetables and in explaining the role of oxidation and other changes in the deterioration of frozen fruits and vegetables, particularly peas, snap beans, soybeans and carrots. Lee had more than 65 peer-reviewed scientific articles published during his career plus numerous review articles and bulletins. In addition to his work at Geneva, Lee traveled extensively in Europe, presenting lectures at international symposia on food and biological chemistry.

Born in Seattle in 1901, Lee received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D from the University of Washington. Before coming to the Experiment Station in 1936, he was an

assistant chemist for the State of Washington; an assistant professor of pharmacology and food chemistry at Duquesne University, where he eventually attained the rank of associate professor; and a postdoctoral associate at Leland Stanford University where he worked in the Food Research Institute. Prior to his appointment at Cornell University, Lee worked as a chemist for the Hunt Brothers Packing Company in San Francisco. He was a member of the American Chemical Society and very active in the Institute of Food Technologists, especially the Western New York Section where he was a founding member and served as secretary, treasurer, chairman, and councilor over a period of years. Lee was on the editorial boards of the Institute's two major publications, *Food Technology* and the *Journal of Food Science*. Additionally, he was a member of Phi Lambda Upsilon and Sigma Xi.

Lee, a bachelor and an only child, is survived by family in Alaska, California, and Germany.

With 19 unit libraries and a total of more than six million volumes in its collection, Cornell University Library is one of the 10 largest academic research libraries in the United States. The New York State Agricultural Experiment Station was established in 1882 by an act of the New York State Legislature. The Experiment Station library is one of the oldest in the Cornell system.

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